

# AYSO Region 112

## U6/U7/U8 Referee Handbook



- Section 1 - Game Responsibilities
- Section 2 – Region 112 Guidelines
- Section 3 – “Simplified” Laws of the Game for Non-Competitive Divisions

### Introduction

- The goal of the U-6 through U-8 divisions is to give players and their parents an introduction to the game of soccer.
- The U-6 division does not use referees. Games should be controlled by both coaches.
- Minor changes to the laws of the game have been made to increase the amount of playing time for players with the intent to develop their ball skills and make the game more fun.
- The referee's primary goal is to keep the game FAIR, FUN, and SAFE.
- Fair – so no one team or player gets an unfair advantage over the other, thus taking away from the fun of the experience;
- Fun – it must be fun to get them to come back season after season. Thus, trifling over small offenses that have no consequence to the game or fairness should be avoided in favor of letting the players play.
- Safe – in particular inspecting the field and ensuring the goals are anchored to the ground so they do not fall on the players. Suspending the game in the face of dangerous weather conditions such as thunder or lightning.

### Referee Development

These divisions are also meant to introduce new persons to the game of soccer as referees. As the outcome of the games have NO bearing on standings, thus non-competitive, referees can and will make mistakes, but such mistakes have no ultimate consequence to either teams. Mistakes should be expected and accepted by players, coaches, and spectators. When in doubt, remember the unwritten Law 18 – Common Sense – and do what you think is most fair.

Read on for specific direction officiating games at this level.

**And thank you for volunteering! In AYSO, it's more than the game.**

### Section 1 - GAME RESPONSIBILITIES

#### Pregame and Player Check-in

- Arrive 15 minutes before scheduled game time and conference with your assistant referees, if any, or recruit club linesmen.
- Conduct the equipment check early enough (off the field before the end of the prior game if necessary) to permit the game to start on time.
- Generally, teams' supporters take opposite sides. If space allows, spectators should remain 3 yards back from touchline
- Home side: north or west; Visitor: south or east
- Generally, home team provides ball, but referee may require a ball from visitor if home team has no suitable ball
- Be alert for player medical problems and injuries before, during or after the game. Do not touch any injured player or attempt treatment of any injury. If you observe signs of a medical condition or an injury, determine whether it appears to be major or minor. If it appears to be major, stop play at your discretion, and summon the player's coach to deal with the situation.

#### Game Reports

The coach of each team is responsible for presenting a game card to the referees prior to player check-in on the field. Make sure to describe in the game report the circumstances of any serious injury, poor behavior or other notable incidents during the game. Some non-competitive divisions may not require game cards, so check with the coaches before checking in the players. If a serious, reportable incident occurs and you have not game card to document the information, contact the division coordinator or the referee administrator to communicate the incident.

#### Game Control

The objective for all referees is to maintain a balance between “flow and control” of the match. The Laws of the Game of soccer are designed to allow the game to “flow” continuously with stoppage of play only to maintain “control” and for infractions of the Laws. The trick is to exercise authority and control the participants firmly but without confrontation or provocation and to get the match started again as soon as possible. The

best way to manage your game is to know the Laws that apply to the games you officiate.

## Protecting the Goalkeeper

In this level game, the goalkeeper is considered to be in possession of the ball by touching it with any part of the hand or arm, regardless of whether they are in total control of the ball. Should an opponent kick at the ball while in the goalkeeper's possession, stop play and award a free kick.

## Section 2 – Region 112 Guidelines

Referees (and Coaches) should remember that this age group is by design non-competitive in the standings to eliminate the concern for game outcomes. While that does not remove the sense of competitiveness during the game, all adults should recognize imposing their expectations for winning often detracts from the players' enjoyment.

Do not expect to see many significant fouls during these matches. A player falling down or incidental player contact does not necessarily constitute a foul or a need to stop play.

Players at this age will almost never purposely foul an opponent, but if that player's act is unfair and constitutes a foul, the referee should blow the whistle and give a free kick to the fouled team. If the act has little consequence to the game, the referee can let the play go on. The players' reactions will often give a clue to what they expect.

As it's the referee's job to keep the game moving, he/she cannot and should be explaining every stoppage to players or coaches. The reason to stop is usually obvious, but as play continues quickly, the referee must be focused on the next play, not the one that's past.

All matches in the U7 and U8 divisions should be conducted using the diagonal system of control with 1 referee and 2 assistant referees. If assistant referees are not available, a single referee will suffice. The referee may recruit club linesmen from each team in the absence of assistant referees. Under NO circumstances shall two referees officiate the game on the field using the two-whistle system.

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### Pregame Duties:

- 1) Walk the field and check for unsafe conditions
- 2) Meet with the other Referees and decide who will keep time and who will back-up time. Ask for Club Linesman volunteers from each team if three referees are not available.

- 3) Collect a game card from the coach (if appropriate)
- 4) Check the players equipment - shirts tucked in, socks over shin guards, nothing hard or metal in hair, no jewelry, no friendship bracelets, safe shoes (tennis shoes or cleats are OK), no casts, no splints
- 5) On the game card (if appropriate), mark the substitutes (players out), note which team kicks off in the first half & direction (N or S, E or W) of the kickoff.
- 6) Collect a game ball from the home team coach (listed first on the schedule)
- 7) There is no need for a coin flip in non-competitive divisions. Visitors will Kick Off first and the Home team will choose which end to defend first. Switch sides and kickoff to start the second half.

### Start of game:

- 1) Ensure that the correct number of players is on the field for your division.
- 2) Assure players are properly positioned (own half of field and ten yards from ball)
- 3) Blow your whistle to start game. (Remember to be decisive with the whistle, not meek)

### During the game:

- 1) Remember that the lines are part of the areas that they mark; therefore a ball must go completely over the touch line for a throw-in, completely over the goal line for a goal, and completely over the penalty box line on a goal kick (or it's retaken).
- 2) Mark any goals by hash marks in the columns next to the player's name.
- 3) Wait for a natural stoppage in play (e.g. a throw-in) half way through the first half and second half before blowing the whistle for water break and substitution. Remember, keep the clock is running during the entire game.
- 4) See additions comments and tips below.

### After the game:

- 1) Collect the game ball and return it to the Home team coach.
- 2) Supervise any cheer / handshake ceremony that takes place.
- 3) Verify the score and print your name and team number on the back of the card.
- 4) Give game cards to home team coach who will place them in the manila envelope for the division coordinator.

## Section 3 - Laws for Non-Competitive Divisions: U6, U7, and U8

Any laws enumerated below have been addressed to clarify any alteration made for youth and small-sided games from the FIFA *Laws of the Game*.

## Law 1: Field of Play.

The size of the field is established by the region. For the most part, use the fields as marked as long as the field conditions are safe. The most important safety check is that the goals are anchored to the ground. In some cases only a penalty area will be mark, but no goal area.

## Law 2: The Ball

- Size: 3
- Provided by home team
- Ball color is NOT a consideration

## Law 3: Number of Players.

### Under 6 Division

- Six players (6v6) per side on the field
- NO goalkeeper

### Under-7 and Under-8 Divisions

- Seven players (7v7) per side on the field
- One of the players designated as goalkeeper in a distinctive jersey, different from all other players. Teams are issued a goalkeeper jersey.

### Substitution periods and procedure

- Done during a normal stoppage of play (ball stopped for foul, out of bounds, injury, etc.)
  1. Halfway thru first half (don't have to be exact time)
  2. Halftime
  3. Halfway thru second half
  4. For an injury

### Everybody Plays

- All players present at start of match are required to play three-quarters of the match.
- Deviations must be noted on the match card, e.g. injured, sick, etc.

## Law 4: Player's Equipment.

Required uniform equipment

1. Shirt
2. Shorts
3. Socks
4. Shinguards (under the socks)
5. Footwear (may be any type of shoe as long as it is safe, i.e. Tennis shoes are OK, spiked baseball or golf cleats cannot be used)

### Prohibited equipment

- NO jewelry of any kind (except medic alert bracelet or necklace)
- NO splints or casts, plaster or otherwise

## Law 5: The Referees.

- All matches in the U7 and U8 divisions should be conducted using the diagonal system of control with

1 referee and 2 assistant referees. If assistant referees are not available, a single referee will suffice. The referee may recruit club linesmen from each team in the absence of assistant referees.

- Under NO circumstances shall two referees officiate the game on the field using the two-whistle system.
- The U-6 division does not use referees. Games should be controlled by both coaches.

The decision of the referee regarding facts connected with play is final, regardless of the age or experience of the referee. **A referee may change his or her initial decision on any matter, so long as play has not restarted.**

- Reasonable coaching and encouragement of players shall be allowed from the **technical area only** (defined as 10 yards in either direction from the halfway line and 1 yard off the touchline).
- Coaches are restricted to and taught "PIE": positive, instructional, or encouraging comments only.
- The referee has the authority to take action against any coach, spectator or participants who fail to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Referees may expel persons who interfere from the vicinity of field of play.
- Referees are encouraged to elicit the assistance of the team officials (coach or assistant coach) when dealing with outside interference (problem spectators).
- Report all such problems on the match report. Describe the problem person or provide his/her name, if known.
- Address potential interference early before it becomes more serious. **See Law 12 below.**

## Law 6: The Assistant Referees

The Assistant Referees (AR) are subordinate to the Referee. One Referee may officiate a match without ARs if there are none available.

## Law 7: Duration of the Game

### Under-6 Division

Two 16-minute halves, 5-minute half time break

### Under-7 and Under-8 Divisions

Two 20-minute halves, 5-minute half time break

- Begin timing match on scheduled time, even if play has not started. Keep watch running for duration of half.
- Do NOT add time at end of half.
- Referee may use discretion to allow player extra time for water in extreme heat, but the time shall NOT be added at the end of the half.

## Law 8: Start of play.

### Coin Toss - None

- Home team chooses side to defend
- Visiting team kicks off
- Second half, teams switch ends and Home Team kicks off

### Dropped Ball

Use this restart when no other restart applies:

- Stopped play solely for an injury or outside agent interfering with play on the field, or weather conditions (thunder or lightning).
- No requirement for the number of players present at dropped ball.
- Drop ball at location where ball was when play was stopped, but never less than 6 yards from any goal.

## Law 9: Ball In and Out of Play

Do NOT anticipate the ball going out. Wait until it is completely over the boundary line before signaling. Do NOT use the whistle to signal out of bounds unless players keep playing the ball.

## Law 10: Method of Scoring

Referee cannot award a goal the referee, or neutral assistant referees, have not seen go into the goal.

## Law 11: Offside.

Do NOT enforce offside in these divisions.

## Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct and Law

- Few fouls occur at this age. Don't trifle by calling every little thing. Players will fall down out of clumsiness, rather than fouls, so make a distinction. Most common fouls will be deliberately handling the ball, tripping, holding, pushing and dangerous play. All fouls in this age group are restarted with a **Direct Free Kick (DFK)** at the point of the foul.
- Misconduct (Red and Yellow) cards should not be necessary to maintain order in these divisions. Do not caution or send off players.
- Should a player in these divisions act out, or disrupt the game enough to justify having the player leave, walk the player to the coach and ask the coach to have the player sit down. You may allow another player into the match.
- Referees have the authority to discipline coaches and assistant coaches. They are only allowed to make **POSITIVE, INSTRUCTIONAL, or ENCOURAGING** comments to the players. When comments or actions deviate from responsible behavior, address it early with a look, friendly word, or a warning. If such behavior is bad enough that someone should know about it, tell the coach you are cautioning him, **and note it on the match report** (game card). Do NOT show team officials or spectators yellow or red cards.

## Law 13: Free Kicks

- All restarts for fouls are **Direct Free Kicks (DFK)**, regardless of the type of foul. Thus, a goal can be scored directly from any free kick.
- Opponents should move away from the restart location so the ball can be put into play. While 10 yards is required, on the small fields, 6 to 8 yards should suffice, but be consistent throughout the match.

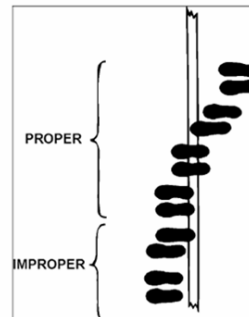
## Law 14: Penalty Kicks

Do not give Penalty Kicks. Place the ball outside the penalty area at the nearest point to the foul and award a DFK.

## Law 15: Throw-ins

- Do NOT trifle over the form of the players' throw in. It's more important to get the play restarted. If it's close, let it go.
- When ball is released from the hands and does not break the plane of the touchline, the throw in must be retaken
- No goal may be scored directly from a throw-in.
- In the interest of flow, fun, and learning, players may be allowed a second chance to throw in ball correctly.

### THROW IN – FEET PLACEMENT (Visual)



## Law 16: Goal Kicks

- Some fields will not have marked goal areas. Ball may be placed in general area for goal kick, about first third of marked penalty area.
- A goal may be scored direct from a goal kick
- Opponents must be outside the penalty area for taking of the goal kick.

## Law 17: Corner Kicks

- Opponents must remain 5 to 8 yards away from corner arc so kick may be taken
- A goal can be scored directly from a corner kick
- Players may not move or remove the corner flags